

# He Sings at Breakfast

## OUTGOING MAYOR MCKELDIN:

### AN ENIGMA IN A HOMBURG

Story by JAMES D. DILTS / Photos by WILLIAM L. KLENDER

THREE thousand East Baltimore street, Brother Pulley," said the most popular Republican vote getter the State of Maryland has ever produced. "Baltimore and Potomah, Baltimore and PoTOMah," he said, savoring the pronunciation. Then the onetime boy orator from South Baltimore who rose to become Mayor in the Forties, Governor for two terms in the Fifties and Mayor again in the Sixties, dug down in his brief case and pulled out the day's schedule. And as he rode through the early-morning streets of the city on one of his last trips as Mayor, Theodore Roosevelt McKeldin began to read.

"Ten o'clock, the Board of Estimates. Twelve noon, present an honorary citizen's certificate. . . . I'm busier now than I ever was. Ask Pulley. On Saturday I addressed a convention of the blind. It's a difficult group to talk to, the blind. What do you say to the blind?" The Mayor leaned back in the seat and wondered aloud what you say to the blind.

"I was unhappy when I saw a man who had no shoes until I saw a man who had no feet"; he intoned, eyes raised. Abruptly they fell. "Would I see a man who had no feet? And would it make me happy? It seems to me it would depress me. That's the trouble with those cliches—they sound all right at first."

"He gave a great speech yesterday. The Five Nations. He was in real good shape. Ever since he got back from Vietnam he's been goin'," said James Pulley, the Mayor's chauffeur, after he drove up in the Cadillac limousine and parked in front of the Mayor's house at 7.30 A.M. "His honor's not up yet. I can tell," Pulley announced expertly as he made a survey of the front of the house.

McKeldin is the third mayor Pulley has worked for in his sixteen years as a city chauffeur. "Don't put my name in," he said, "I like to stay in the background of politics. It used to be fun—I didn't think a job could be so easy—now it's work."

Except on mornings like this when the Mayor had an early appointment, Pulley leaves the Mayor's house at 103 Goodale road in Homeland between 8 and 8.30 to arrive at City Hall at 9. Occasionally the Mayor enlivens the trip with a

speech. "Yeah, sometimes I hear 'em before anybody else does," said Pulley in a manner that left some doubt as to whether he considered it one of the benefits of the job.

The five nations," the Mayor was saying. "I gave that speech at Forest Park High School. The five nations—uh," he said, warming up his vocal chords in earnest and beginning to round off the final consonants with that Lawrence Welk flourish.

"Collaboration. The ability to work together. Your friends will be my friends. Determination. It's no use to make friends if you can't see it through." He told his Robert the Bruce story: "Six times he tried and failed and the seventh time he succeeded. Resignation," he continued. "You can't sell 'em all. Resignation—uh. Imagination. The one that separates the sheep from the goats. Painters. I line up about five of 'em. An average man, he sees a can of paint and a brush, that's all he sees. Imagination. And coronation. You've finally made it.

I'VE given that speech so many times I don't know it any more. I used to do a lot of high schools. I caught 'em young when they didn't know any better—then they'd vote for me later on."

The car pulled up and the Mayor got out in front of a funeral home. The son of a city employee, a Marine killed in action in Vietnam, was to be buried that morning. The Mayor went in, knelt by the side of the casket and came back out to stand on the corner.

The Mayor went back in for the service and when he returned he was visibly subdued. "Twenty years of age," he said. "Gunshot wound. That's a senseless war we're in. I hope the President finds some way to get out of that mess. Brother Pulley, let's go over to my house."

PULLEY drove to the old Friends Meeting House on Fayette street which is being restored under McKeldin's auspices. The Mayor jumped out and accosted several Negro workers who were mixing plaster in front of the building. "Good morning, Mayor," they said.

"Work fast, my brothers, work hard," cried the Mayor. "Finish this job before I get out of office." (The Mayor addresses Negroes and Jews almost invariably as

"my brother.") After a fast look inside at the half-completed restoration of what he said was the oldest church building in the city, he confronted them again. "You know in Europe the workers who built the cathedrals had to go to mass and confession to prove they were holy." The plaster mixing stopped momentarily. "I know you're holy." Backslap, ribjab, smiles, renewed mixing. "Okay, Mayor."

Back downtown, the Mayor headed for the hotel diagonally across the street from City Hall for some breakfast. He ordered, brushed off a favor seeker with "Speak to one of my secretaries," and as he sat down at the table to await his plate of eggs and toast, sang a chorus of "All Through the Night."

"Who's that singing?" demanded a waitress, peering over the counter. "Oh," she said.

"For a long time I figured Teddy McKeldin for nothing but a clown—well, confound it, he is," said Gerald W. Johnson, a former Sunpapers editorial writer, one of the editors of the New Republic and a onetime McKeldin speech writer. "But underneath he's sincere in trying to establish better race relations in Baltimore. He's been at it for 30 years and the results showed up this summer. So his great achievement is purely negative. This was a target city. Well, they didn't realize what a fire extinguisher McKeldin is."

"There's no doubt in my mind that his influence on the State has been extremely salutary. McKeldin has a good record as governor. But he's been handicapped, or helped, as governor and as mayor, by a legislative body of the opposition party. So whatever he gets through, he gets double credit for."

"He's a practical idealist. Philosophically, he's an eclectic. If he sees an idea, he uses it, he doesn't care where it comes from. That's what made him exasperating to old-style conservative politicians."

"Of course there's been great bitterness in the Republican party because McKeldin has never tried to build it up. The only thing he could do is win an election occasionally. He couldn't build up the party if they didn't get in back of him and they never have. If a man proves he can win, Maryland Republicans drop him instantly. But since I've been in Maryland—40 years—they have never had

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HE first came to the attention of Maryland Republicans exactly 40 years ago, the Mayor said after the Board of Estimates meeting as he sat in his City Hall office with its leather settees, huge mirrors and ornate chandeliers. (Its florid, Nineteenth Century style was described by a City Hall reporter as "Victorian brothel.")

McKeldin had decided he wanted to campaign for William F. Broening, Republican candidate for mayor in 1927. "I went down to see them at City Hall. I told them I wanted to make some speeches, you know, speak in halls. They said, 'You have to have a reputation to speak in halls. You can have the back of a truck.'"

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"Well, I went out and got on the truck. It was painted red, white and blue. They said 'Who are you?' I said I wanted to speak for Broening, Bell and Tome. The man pointed across the street. There was a garbage truck over there. He said, 'You can go on that.' You see, you had to be known in those days.

"Anyway I stayed on the truck and we went down to Fayette street. A guy came up with a trumpet and blew it. About eight or nine people gathered around, and I started my speech. I did all right."

Broening was elected and made McKeldin his executive secretary. "I learned more from that man than from any other man on earth," said the Mayor.

The Broening experience, in fact, may have given McKeldin his prime political theory, one that has enabled him to win as a Republican in a heavily Democratic state and in a city where registered Democrats outnumber Republicans five to one: don't run against a young "fresh" Democrat. If you're unexpectedly faced with one, make sure there's a fight in the Democratic ranks. There usually is anyway, a situation McKeldin has used to his advantage almost since he first started running in 1939.

"He has minority appeal. He puts together a weird combination of poor Negroes and wealthy whites. His strength among voters is the fact that he's always been able to stand as a liberal Republican against machine politicians," said Robert Loevy, who covered City Hall as a reporter and is now assistant professor of political science at Goucher College. Dr. Loevy, who predicted McKeldin's win in 1963, examined in his doctoral dissertation the effects of Democratic factionalism on several McKeldin campaigns.

He writes: "In 1927, William F. Broening elected himself the first GOP mayor of Baltimore since 1895 by uniting the descendants of 'Sonny' Mahon against Kellity candidate Willie Curran. (Mahon and Frank Kelly were rival Democratic bosses in the Twenties.) In 1943, McKeldin reenacted Broening's victory by getting Jack Pollack (the near-legendary Democratic boss of Baltimore's Fourth district) on his side in a show-down battle with incumbent Mayor Howard Jackson."

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McKELDIN won by 20,000 votes, the biggest majority ever given a Repub-

lican in Baltimore. He won again seven years later in the race for governor running against William Preston Lane and the sales tax. He received 94,000 votes, the biggest majority ever given a gubernatorial candidate of either party up to then. "I was not elected, Mr. Lane was defeated and Mr. Lane was not defeated, the sales tax was defeated," said the Mayor. (Once in office, McKeldin not only didn't repeal the sales tax, as he'd said he would during the campaign, but increased it to 3 per cent. "I made a mistake, originally," he said later.)

In 1954, running against the former president of the University of Maryland, Dr. H. C. Byrd, McKeldin was reelected. The issue was school integration; McKeldin was in favor of a moderate but progressive integration program. He won by 60,000 votes.

Altogether, McKeldin has run eight times and won four. He's only missed two races, that for mayor in 1947 and the one for Governor in 1962. He explained, "I was defeated for governor in 1946 and I was in no mood to run for mayor in 1947." Of 1962, the Mayor said simply, "It was not my turn."

The following year, however, it was. Yet his last race which, he says, was also his toughest (he won by just 4,600 votes) seems to contradict the theory. McKeldin's opponent four years ago was Philip Goodman, a young non-incumbent and for once the Democrats presented a solidly united front.

But McKeldin's practiced eye spotted cracks in the facade. "Some of the people who were for Phil in the faction, I could sense weren't enthusiastically for Phil. So I got some assurances that I would get support from them. Quietly. And I got that support. I don't want to identify them."

Despite his talent for winning, the Mayor's relationship with the State Republican party, especially the conservative wing, has remained almost as chilly as the reception he got in 1927 when he went to City Hall to offer his services as a speech maker. In 1964, he left the Republicans altogether in a dispute with the Goldwater segment and endorsed Johnson.

WHY, then, is he a Republican? The Mayor's voice rose sonorously. "I'm a Republican because my grandfather was, who came from Scotland and saw people enslaved because they had faces that were not his color. He enlisted in the Union Army, was killed at the battle of the Monocacy in Frederick county, Maryland, fighting under General Lew Wallace of Ben Hur fame out of Indiana, and is buried at Antietam. That made my father a Republican and I'm his son and it made me a Republican."

"I remember making that statement in a forum in a big synagogue in Worcester, Mass., and they laughed. They said is that a good enough reason to be a Republican because your grandfather and your father were? I said if I were not so closely identified with Jewish causes I wouldn't give you this answer because it might be misunderstood. But I said it is as good as the answer your fathers gave when they were slaves in Babylon and the book says they stood

by the waters of Babylon and cried out 'If I shall forget the old Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.' And if I should forget the sacrifices my fathers made for me, may mine also lose her cunning."

To what effect has McKeldin used his office? Some observers feel the high point of his career was his first term as governor when he overhauled antiquated budgetary procedures and continued Governor Lane's program of road and facilities construction. And in 1952, he became a national figure when he nominated Eisenhower at the Republican National Convention. He fulfilled speaking engagements all over the country, many of them to sell bonds for Israel. (He still travels to foreign countries regularly; his last trip abroad was to Vietnam in September as one of the election judges.)

Yet a number of people feel that this term as mayor, especially this summer when he helped stop the city from burning, probably equals anything that went before. This summer may, in fact, turn out to have been his crowning achievement.

He got a crash job program started and vowed to visit all 28 Community Action Agency neighborhood centers in an effort to cool things off. He did. On the way the Mayor promised to renew his efforts to get funds for a city-wide war on rats and to back a bill whereby rent would be placed in escrow until landlords made repairs. (He has already backed the busing of school children from the ghetto to better schools throughout the city.) C.O.R.E.'s Floyd McKissick, for one, at Newark's black power conference, credited Baltimore's open-minded political leaders for their part in preventing a Newark-style rebellion here.

"He kept his cool beautifully," said Peter Marudas. Marudas is a former Evening Sun reporter who several months ago became the Mayor's administrative assistant.

"My impression is the Mayor has to deal with the overblow and the major problems. He doesn't have time to get involved with the details. Even if he chose to be obsessed with administration, he couldn't do it. In the 1940's the city's budget was \$78,000,000. Now it's over \$400,000,000. Take civil rights. Who was even making promises in the Forties? Now you have to have a task force."

"My first term was nothing compared to this," Mayor McKeldin was saying. "I just had a chief engineer, a water engineer, a highway engineer, a comparatively small welfare department. The chief engineer used to run the whole department of public works for me and the city solicitor, Simon Sobeloff, he ran all the other departments. (Judge Sobeloff, an old friend of the Mayor's, was appointed United States solicitor general in the Fifties by then President Eisenhower upon McKeldin's recommendation; he is now a United States Circuit Court judge.)

BUT now the thing is so complicated, with the money that we get from Washington and the State and so many investigations and inquiries. People talk to me about bills I never heard of that have been introduced. It's not possible to

be on top of the job now. We've got two or three people here and a corporation of about \$500,000,000.

"The Mayor's office is completely inadequate to cope with what's going on. The management of the great municipalities is more complicated and more distressing than ever. I think it's a greater challenge to be mayor than to be governor. So far as the challenge is concerned it's equally as great, I think, to be mayor as it is to be President. Here's where the masses are, here's where the uneducated are coming in. Here's where you have the marches and the riots. And properly so in my opinion if people are not given the necessities of life."

The Mayor has gotten a number of programs which reflect his progressive philosophy through the Democratic City Council: the rent supplement and self-help housing programs and the reorganization of the public works department were some of the more controversial ones.

In early 1964, at the beginning of his term, he made a unique appearance before the Council to urge the enactment of a civil rights program. The Council passed it although the open housing section was deleted and the public accommodations provision was narrowed. Twice since then McKeldin has introduced open housing legislation; twice the City Council has defeated it.

"He has a peculiar mode of operation as a Mayor," said Tommy D'Alesandro, president of the City Council. "I've watched other mayors—Jackson, my father, Grady. He'll originate legislation and pass it up to us and take a hands-off attitude. I don't think dealing with the Council is one of his strong points."

My record with the Council is excellent," the Mayor continued. "You can only do what's possible in this business. On open housing we tried to bribe—legitimately bribe with jobs—and we couldn't get it through. Nobody has been more involved with the City Council than I have—that's where Mr. Adelson comes in."

M. William Adelson, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate from Washington and Lee and valedictorian of his law school class at Duke, has been associated with the Mayor since the Thirties. "He is McKeldin's 'backroom man.'"

"They love each other, they hate each other," says a close observer. "McKeldin plays the noble leader responsive to the wishes of the people. Bill Adelson leads the shock forces on the front line. Whatever needs to be done down in the nitty-gritty of politics, he'll work out the problems. He has the intellect and force to deal with the system. McKeldin could not exist without men who can come to grips with the system. His answer is 'See Bill.'"

"He was my political adviser at Annapolis," said the Mayor. "You have to have somebody handle the details of things. You can't expect people to do favors for you or vote for something they don't particularly want if you're not going to take care of some of the people in their precincts who need jobs."

"And while I was Mayor he would talk with the members of the City Council

and they would talk with him. I'm not much on patronage—it's not my field—whether you should give this one a job or that one a job. He would give me some recommendation," said the Mayor.

"I don't advise the Mayor on anything," said Bill Adelson. "I've told people I have neither the time nor the money to be involved in political affairs. I talk to him on occasion about things here and there that are of interest to city government. My interest isn't politics but people. What jobs? You know I wrote the open housing ordinance the Mayor introduced in 1963. Then we started counting votes. I was asked to participate in a meeting with the various councilmen to try to reconcile their differences. The meeting started at 8 A.M. at my house and lasted until 2 or 3 the next morning. I had as many as twenty people sitting in on the discussion. The thing bogged down with the councilmen in the Third district. You've got certain districts; they'd never vote for it. They could burn down City Hall, they'd never vote for it."

"People have the impression when we open the door in the morning there's a bucket of money out there. Well, I open the door every morning," sighed Adelson, puffing a cloud of cigar smoke at the ceiling, "and you know something—I've never seen one of those buckets."

The Mayor, a large figure in a gray topcoat and a wide-brimmed homburg, moved up the steps of City Hall and as he passed swiftly down the hall toward his office, a man fell in step beside him. He was carrying a small plaque to which a tiny rack of antlers had been attached with a couple of screws. "Hello, Max," said the Mayor.

As they reached the door, Max said something to the effect that "Now they say I have to let colored in my place." The Mayor fumbled for his key and something to say. Max presented his plaque. "I love you, Mr. Mayor," he said.

"Max is from Romania," said the Mayor.

He went inside. He put the plaque on top of a cabinet that held other plaques and photographs and the accumulated debris of four years in office. "Max loves me," said the Mayor to his secretary as he passed into his office.

"My enthusiasm has waned. There are a number of things. One is his disregard for economy. He's setting a poor example in his own office. The expenses have doubled in three years, while in my office I've been removing employees that weren't needed," said Hyman Pressman, city comptroller.

"Secondly, I'm disappointed in the many acts of favoritism in giving out engineering consultant contracts without competitive bidding. I wanted a review board to process consultants in the field and make recommendations. The best I could get was a board to approve recommendations. It accomplished little."

"The third element that disturbs me is that he threw obstacles in my path in the many efforts I made not only in economy but for the better working of city government. It became obvious to me that he would oppose my ideas just be-

cause I proposed them. SUN

It was early afternoon and the Mayor was conferring with his department heads prior to a meeting with the Carroll county commissioners who, they knew, were going to ask to take 3,000,000 gallons of water a day from a city reservoir. The city officials agreed they could afford to sell that amount of water but if the request went up to 10,000,000 gallons next year, it would cut into the city's supply. They decided to give the commissioners what they wanted.

The commissioners filed in. "How many?" said the Mayor, cutting short the preliminaries.

"Mr. Mayor," said the spokesman, "we'd like to take about 3,000,000 gallons out of that little old reservoir up there." NOV 2 1967

"Man, you want to empty that thing, don't you," exclaimed the Mayor, rearing back in his chair in mock alarm.

THERE followed a technical discussion of pumping capacities between the county engineer and Bernard L. Werner, the city's director of public works. After some more pleasantries, the Mayor said, "Let us study the proposal," and the commissioners left. SUN

"Bernie," said the Mayor when they'd gone, "I was afraid you were going to give everything away."

"Whaddaya mean," said Werner, "there wasn't any problem."

"I know, but I didn't want them to know that."

"The militants came in this summer and said they wanted jobs," said John Woodruff, city hall reporter for The Sun.

"The Mayor said, 'Give me a couple of weeks.'"

"They said, 'We need these jobs now.'"

"He said, 'How many?'"

"Two hundred and fifty," they said.

"I'll have 350 tomorrow morning. Get the people in here."

"He's smart. He gave them the opportunity to pound the desk. He knew he had the jobs. They've had unskilled city jobs they haven't been able to fill in years. They had to run to get that many people. They didn't have time to riot."

"Somebody said on one of these visits to the neighborhood poverty centers he ought to go into an acting career when he gets out of office. I said, 'What do you think he's concluding?'"

THE last of the poverty tours started in front of City Hall in mid afternoon, the Mayor's limousine leading a caravan of cars of newsmen and representatives of city departments. In the library of the first center, in a public housing project, the Mayor told the story of how he went to work at 14 after finishing grammar school but later attended night school and finally got a law degree from the University of Maryland. Persevere he was saying and you can rise to the top.

At the second center, also in a project, a group of women representing the resident councils said they wanted a crossing light, a littered alley cleaned, more police protection. The department representatives took the information down.

At the third center, on East Baltimore street, a man standing out on the sidewalk watched the procession enter and

said "I didn't look for the Mayor to be down here." Inside a woman was saying, "I live in Lafayette-Douglas Homes. Why can't I get a larger refrigerator? They say you can't unless you have eleven children." NOV 20 1957

"Why don't you?" said the Mayor.

"Well, if I could support eleven children I wouldn't be in public housing," the woman stammered.

"Don't you believe in family planning?" someone asked the Mayor.

"No," he said. "If I did I wouldn't be here. I was number ten."

The Mayor, who was born November 20, 1900, was the tenth of eleven children of a Scotch-Irish stonemason and policeman, an immigrant from Belfast. His mother came from Germany. The lack of a high school education prevented him from becoming a preacher, his first ambition. (He is a Methodist but attends the Episcopal church.) But along with his night school courses he took some public speaking lessons from Dale Carnegie who was then touring the country. McKeldin later taught the course himself. When he was 24 he married the former Honolulu Claire Manzer. They have a son, Theodore R. McKeldin, Jr., an assistant United States attorney and a daughter, Clara Ziegler, both of whom are married. There are two grandchildren.

"Why aren't you running?" a man wanted to know.

"I'm 67," McKeldin said, "and the Democrat who's running against me, Tommy, is 39. And I was just convinced that 67 could not beat 39. I profited by that myself. In 1943 when I ran against Howard Jackson, I was 41 and he was 60 some. He'd been Mayor for 16 years. So they didn't vote for me they voted against Howard Jackson to give a young man a chance. It worked well in my favor and it would work well against me. I just couldn't win. I didn't want to end my career with a smashing defeat. And if I were defeated it might be seen as the defeat of my championing of minority groups and that would be bad for us."

SOMETHING else that might have affected the Mayor's decision was lack of campaign money.

"(Democracy is the most dangerous form of government," the Mayor had said, then explained cryptically, "people run out on you, things can change overnight.") NOV 20 1957

Most people seem to feel he's run his last race and the experts are ready to retire him to a number of careers. Gerald Johnson thinks he would make an excellent executive for the inner harbor project. Professor Loevy at Goucher believes he would be an effective Ambassador to Israel ("provided they got a good second-in-command to run the office"). Others feel he will take the job of good-will ambassador for the Port of Baltimore. President Johnson has considered him for four positions, all of which the Mayor has turned down because he says he doesn't want to leave Baltimore.

"Swan song? Maybe your premise is wrong. So long as he has life in his body he will always be a candidate—con-

sciously or unconsciously," said Samuel A. Culotta, a special assistant to McKeldin during his first term as Governor.

"I think this summer put a terrific strain on him. I'd like to see him take of rest for six months. He gets revived. Then I'll bet he'll want to go for the Senate."

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"He's still a very restless soul," said old friend Simon Sobeloff.



Mayor McKeldin wins approval of youths after shooting a basket at a recreation center, where he turned on new lights. Richard Childress took the photograph.



The Mayor wearing a yarmulka which he donned to receive a visiting rabbi.